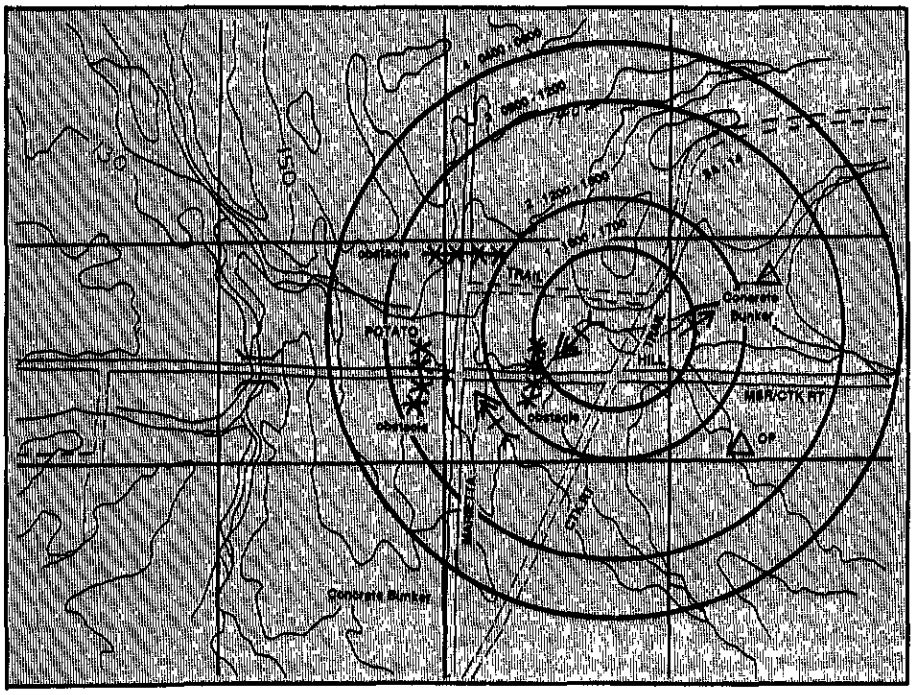

Figure 4. Concentric circle technique.

cides to give his squads an hour to compile and send their reports also. Thus the squad reconnaissances must be completed by 1700. From that time, he reverse-plans a schedule for each circle. The squads will not cross into the next circle until the designated time.

This circle technique forces the platoon to be patient. The enemy, given enough time, will always reveal himself, particularly if he is involved in an inherently noisy operation such as constructing a defense. By slowly working from the outside toward the center of the objective, the patrol reduces its risk of compromise. Often, the patrol will be able to gather the required information without advancing to the innermost circle.

Another benefit of this technique is its function as a control measure to eliminate conflict between the reconnaissance and the battalions' harassing and interdictory fires. For example, when the scouts are outside circle 4, the battalion is clear to fire within circle 2. When the scouts are within circle 1, the battalion is clear to fire outside circle 3.

An area reconnaissance is probably the most dangerous mission for the scouts, because it usually requires them to get so close to the enemy. The mission therefore requires planning considerations that allow for security, exploitation of enemy indicators, and patience. These considerations can be gained through the use of the doctrinal R&S techniques, a scheme of reconnaissance that is based on the situational template, and the concentric circle method of controlling the approach to the objective.

Captain Kevin J. Dougherty is a small-group instructor for the Infantry Officer Advanced Course. He was previously a senior observer at the Joint Readiness Training Center, and has served with the 101st Airborne Division and the Berlin Brigade. He is a 1983 graduate of the United States Military Academy.

Antiarmor
What To Do With a Delta Company

CAPTAIN MICHAEL P. LERARIO

When I was assigned to command a Delta Company in the 82d Airborne Division, I was not very happy about it. Like most infantry captains, I wanted to command a "real" infantry company. After a few weeks in command, however, when I realized what a great opportunity commanding an antiarmor company really is, I changed my mind.

Compared to its counterpart, an Echo Company in a mechanized infantry battalion, the antiarmor company of an airborne or air assault battalion has more mobility, firepower, and protection than the rifle company it supports. When its resources and capabilities are at their best, Delta Company is the most versatile and possibly most important com-

pany in the battalion. At the beginning, though, many commanders do not know where to start or what route to take to get the most out of their Delta companies.

Achieving success with Delta Company depends on three factors: the proper command climate, the proper mission essential task list (METL), and the proper training. Together, these factors provide an answer to the question of what to do with a Delta Company.

Assess the Command Climate

Ideally, light antiarmor companies operate in environments where they are valued members of a battalion task force. Unfortunately, though, in many infantry units the antiarmor infantrymen (MOS 11H) are looked upon as second-class citizens. Rifle company soldiers often see the 11H soldiers as less tough, both physically and mentally, than other infantrymen because they have vehicles (high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles—HMMWVs). In my case, everyone in the battalion seemed to think of Delta Company as the "detail" company—HMMWVs for hire. Changing these attitudes was the first step toward an effective organization.

The solution to this type of command climate involves two key points. The first point is that soldiers with MOS 11H are infantrymen with an antiarmor specialty, not TOW gunners with an infantry secondary MOS. The second point is that many people need to be educated on the capabilities and limitations of Delta Company.

In my company, the first step was to enforce the standards outlined in the battle drill manuals and the mission training plan (MTP). Because our vehicles set us apart from the rifle companies, I focused primarily on the drills and tasks that involved the HMMWV. Topping my list were local security at halts, not running the heaters during tactical operations, and dismounting to clear danger areas in the absence of rifle infantrymen. (We reorganized the company into four platoons with five vehicles each instead of the MTOE of five platoons with six vehicles. This allowed us to assign four men to each vehicle and to make the platoon leader a fighter instead of a command and control link. The new configuration also allowed us to be more effective by dismounting two soldiers from each vehicle, if necessary.) Standards in the company improved as the soldiers became a more active part of the battalion. Their attitudes about themselves improved, and the battalion's attitude about them improved as well.

We reinforced our role as infantrymen in the battalion. We reminded everyone of two important facts: Nearly one-fifth of the infantrymen in the battalion come from the antiarmor company, and Delta Company is a line company, not a combat support company. Later that first year, the company achieved the highest percentage of Expert Infantrymen Badges awarded in the battalion. All mention of "detail" company stopped, but our HMMWVs were still in great demand. Now, however, the other companies wanted the crews and platoons, not just a driver and a vehicle.

Assess the METL

Designed originally to give the light battalion better tank-killing capability, Delta Company has evolved into much more. The addition of heavy machineguns, the M-2 caliber .50, and the MK-19 40mm grenade launcher has given Delta Company the same characteristics as the light cavalry troop. As a result, the antiarmor company has become more versatile. Although its primary focus is still to kill enemy armor, Delta Company is now capable of conducting reconnaissance, counterreconnaissance, and security missions. In light of this improved capability, the following missions and roles are recommended for Delta Company:

Offensive Operations. The *movement to contact* and the *hasty attack* are the primary missions of airborne and air assault battalions once they are deployed. During these operations, Delta Company can screen to the front, flank, or rear; overwatch and support by fire; or serve as the battalion reserve. The company accomplishes these missions in general support to the rifle companies either with Delta Company largely intact, or with its platoons attached to the rifle companies. Keeping Delta Company intact allows it to cover a larger area under the control of a single commander, while attaching platoons to the rifle companies makes the battalion's heavy antitank assets more responsive to a company in contact.

During a deliberate attack, Delta Company's role is almost identical to its role in a movement to contact, but its assets are more effective in overwatch and support-by-fire missions. The TOW systems' thermal sights, used in conjunction with the M-2 and the MK-19, ensure that the objective is isolated, that fires are accurately adjusted and shifted, and that the likelihood of fratricide is reduced.

Our maintenance shop fabricated traversing bars and attached them to the

roofs of the vehicles to improve the accuracy of the HMMWV-mounted M-2. This allowed us to use a traversing and elevation mechanism without dismounting the weapons from their vehicles. The maximum effective range of our mounted M-2s increased from 700 meters to more than 1,500 meters. We provided the rifle companies with greater range, accuracy, and lethality in a mobile support-by-fire position.

Either before or in conjunction with the hasty attack and movement to contact, Delta Company can augment the battalion's intelligence collection by conducting zone and route reconnaissance. This relieves the battalion scouts of these missions, which are difficult to execute dismounted, and allows them to concentrate on area reconnaissance. Delta Company's mobility and firepower allow it to develop the situation better upon contact and either fix the enemy or break contact with him.

One zone reconnaissance technique is to establish a screen along some identifiable terrain feature with a portion of the company, while the rest conducts the reconnaissance behind the screen. Once the zone is reconnoitered to the screen line, a new screen line is established and the reconnaissance continues in this fashion until it is complete.

Defensive Operations. In the defense, the antiarmor company can either operate as a whole, detach its platoons to support rifle company sectors or engagement areas, or form a fourth maneuver element in the battalion by cross-attaching its platoons with the rifle companies. Regardless of the task organization, Delta Company can defend in sector or from a battle position, serve as the counterattack force, or operate in the security zone conducting counterreconnaissance or security operations.

Occupying positions in the main battle area, the antiarmor company's assets serve as the main direct-fire weapons against enemy vehicles. The enemy order of battle will dictate the weapon mix within the company. (With 20 TOW systems, ten MK-19s, and ten M-2 heavy machineguns, Delta Company owns more weapons than it can employ at one time.) Yet the TOW will remain the most important weapon in the main battle area. This is due as much to the TOW's thermal sight as it is to the missile's range and lethality. Since most threat forces employ tanks and infantry together as we do, complementing TOW fires with heavy machineguns makes good sense.

Outside the main battle area, where the attachment of rifle infantrymen becomes critical, Delta Company has an important role. Dismounted patrols between the stationary observation posts (OPs) are necessary for an effective screen. Also, because authorized crew strength is three men per vehicle (a squad in an antiarmor company), OPs should be occupied by sections whenever conducting continuous, 24-hour operations. In counterreconnaissance operations, rifle infantry are effective in establishing ambushes along choke points and natural lines of drift. The trade-off for the antiarmor company comes in providing cargo HMMWVs to transport the riflemen.

BENEFITS

Many infantrymen may resist using the antiarmor company in such a "cavalry-like" manner, but the benefits of doing so often outweigh the risks. The first point to consider is that with the fielding of the Javelin medium antitank weapon, the rifle companies will assume much greater capability and responsibility for killing armor in the main battle area. This can free some, if not most, of the company's TOW assets to perform other missions. *(See "Javelin: A Leap Forward," by Captain John T. Davis, INFANTRY, January-February 1992, pages 14-15.)*

A second point to consider is the depth of the information coming out of the National Training Center (NTC) on the use of the antiarmor company in offensive and defensive operations. Two articles in INFANTRY in recent years discuss in great detail the use of antiarmor assets for missions other than long-range antiarmor fires in the defense. *(See "Team Eagle," by Captain Mark J. Perry and Lieutenant Marc A. Sierra, November-December 1989, pages 11-13; and "Echo Company in a Heavy Task Force," by Captain Edward G. Gibbons, Jr., January-February 1992, pages 28-32).*

Most revealing of all for the HMMWV-equipped units is *TOW Missile System Utilization at the National Training Center* (Rand Corporation Notes, October 1990), which highlights the successes of the opposing force (OPFOR) using TOW HMMWVs to simulate AT-5-equipped BRDM reconnaissance vehicles. The common lesson in all of these sources is the importance of counterreconnaissance to the success of any operation.

Other missions that Delta Company can expect to perform include main supply route (MSR) security and counterattack. With its heavy machineguns and organic M249 machineguns, Delta Company is the ideal force to provide MSR security. Although the HMMWV is not an assault vehicle, it is still the best organic means of displacing combat power in the light battalion. During search and attack missions, Delta Company can provide MSR security and also counterattack enemy elements fixed by the rifle companies.

Training to Standard

ARTEP 7-91 MTP, *Mission Training Plan for the Antiarmor Company/Platoon/Section*, covers performance standards for the traditional antiarmor missions, but the 17 series cavalry platoon and squad manuals provide better insight into the reconnaissance and security missions. Although these references can be used as a starting point for training and evaluation, commanding a Delta Company also requires imagination and initiative to make the most of training opportunities.

Delta Company should use MILES equipment as often as possible to conduct gunnery and execute battle drills. Two drills in particular that require MILES and an OPFOR to evaluate properly are *react to direct fire/ATGM* and *react to ambush*. Setting up battle drill lanes is an easy way to accomplish many tasks with limited time and OPFOR resources.

Since opportunities to fire live missiles are limited, maximum effect from

each missile is critical. Units often conduct missile live fires in a vacuum to ensure target hits, but this does not train gunners for the realities of the battlefield. The heavy machineguns should be used to engage targets during missile flight, and demolitions should be used to simulate enemy attempts to suppress the TOW gunner. All live missile shots should be conducted during limited visibility, either at night or with smoke and obscurants down range.

These suggestions are by no means a complete guide to commanding an antiarmor company; they represent the salient points of my 31 months commanding one of these units. Although I took command with many doubts and regrets, I gave it up thankful for a rewarding experience and regretful only that my turn was over.

Captain Michael P. Lerario commanded Company D, 2d Battalion, 325 Infantry, 82d Airborne Division, during the Gulf War. A 1983 graduate of the United States Military Academy, he is now a graduate student at the academy on an Eisenhower Fellowship.

The Two-Round Zero

CAPTAIN CHES H. GARNER

The current procedure for zeroing an M16A2 rifle wastes time and ammunition and allows such variables as trigger squeeze, breathing, and stock weld to affect the zero. We now use a three-round shot group to minimize the effects of these variables.

We can streamline these zeroing procedures by borrowing some techniques from hunters, who use only two rounds of ammunition to zero a hunting rifle. This method works, whether zeroing iron sights or scopes, and it will also work with the M16A2 rifle.

The shooter places his mechanically zeroed weapon securely in a bench rest and uses the adjustments on the rest to put his rifle sights directly over the center of a 25-meter zero target, or the desired point of aim (Figure 1), and fires a round at the target. Using the bench rest adjustments, he then moves his rifle sights back over the desired point of impact (Figure 2), which compensates for the weapon's recoil.

The shooting coach then goes to the 25-meter zero target and tapes an E-type silhouette (cut from the center of a zero target) directly over the round's entry hole. The firer carefully moves his sight picture directly over the taped-on target. To do this, he raises or lowers the front sight post for elevation corrections and turns the windage knob for left or right corrections (Figure 3). The coach may help the firer by relaying to him the approximate number of elevation and windage clicks needed based upon the strike of the round on the zero target.

The firer now has his sights aligned precisely over the actual point of impact on the target. If the rifle has not slipped in the bench rest during the sight adjustments, it is zeroed. To confirm the zero, the firer simply moves his sights back over the desired point of impact—the original zero target—using the adjustments on the bench rest and fires a

Figure 1

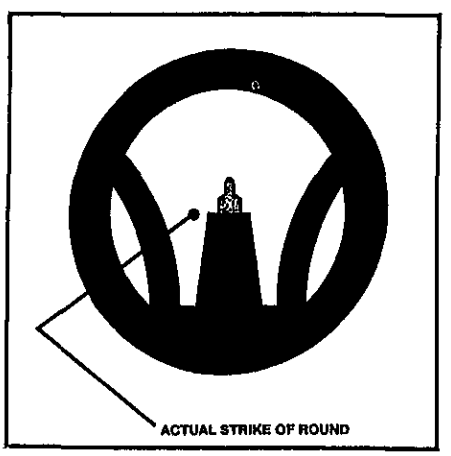

Figure 2

Figure 3